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The Southwest Street Cemetery of Kalamazoo

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THE SOUTH WEST STREET CEMETERY OF KALAMAZOO

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Some of Kalamazoo's founders and first settlers lie buried in unmarked graves beneath the trees, grass, and walks of the South Westnedge Street Park. Few people, hurrying by in their busy ways, realize that this is a cemetery and not a park. This three acre plot, located at the corner of Park Place and South Westnedge Streets, is Kalamazoo's first graveyard. According to historical records, Titus Bronson, when platting the village, generously provided land for a public square, a jail, an academy, churches, a school, and a burial ground. The latter was situated at the present intersection of South and Henrietta Streets. Why it was never used has been forgotten. The first death in the pioneer community occurred when a man, name unknown, died at the Kalamazoo House in the full of 1832. Where he was interred is not known exactly. The first person buried in the South West Street cemetery, as it was then known, was Joseph Wood, age 72, father of Smith L. Wood.[1] Incidently, he was the only person to die in 1833. The Reverend Richard Meek preached Smith's funeral sermon, thereby earning the distinction of being the first to give one in Kalamazoo.

The land comprising the cemetery was given by Cyren and Mary Ann Burdick to the people of the Township of Arcadia. It was to be set aside and to be reserved as a common burial ground and was duly recorded on December 4, 1833, with Stephen Vickery serving as registrar of deeds.[2]

As is so often true of early records, few, if any, are available about the deaths and burials of the county's first permanent settlers. The earliest recorded demise in Kalamazoo County is that of Charles B. Abrams, age 10, who passed away on May 17, 1867, of a "congestion of the bowels."[3] Township death records, previous or after the above date, are non-existent.

It seems that West Street Cemetery was used from its opening date in 1833 until 1862. The Kalamazoo Gazette of the latter year, May 9, tells of the opening of Riverside Cemetery, and the bringing of bodies from the "old cemetery" which had been closed by the Board of Health.[4]

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1. It is said that Wood's Lake, in Oakwood, is named after this family.
2. Kalamazoo County Register of Deeds, Libre B, page 5.
3. Probably a dysentery.
4. The Board of Health of that time consisted of a committee of village trustees and was not, as we know it, a regularly established department.

According to the same paper, but of a later date,[5] Susan Holmes, Gerry Nobly, and Albert Evans[6] were the first to be removed to Riverside Cemetery.[7] Many others were taken either to Riverside or Mountain Home Cemeteries. The exact count has not been established. Some duplication was found in checking the entries in the South West Street Cemetery records against those in the records of Mountain Home and Riverside Cemeteries. In four cases, individuals are listed in the old cemetery records and Mountain Home. The same was true in reference to Riverside Cemetery. This probably came about in that the bodies were removed and the tombstones left behind. In making the plat map and record, it was erroneously assumed that each stone represented a body still in place.

The West Street burial ground was probably closed in 1862 because it was filled to capacity, or almost so. One can easily imagine that there may have also been concern about the fact that the area around the cemetery was being surrounded by the growing village and that there was fear that the ground water, upon which people depended for their daily needs, was contaminated.

The South West Street Cemetery evidently went to seed between its closing in 1862 and the years up to 1884. Work done in the cemetery, in 1884 and later, indicates that nature and children combined forces to leave it in a state of general dilapidation, wrack and ruin. Its condition came to the attention of the village administrators around this time because they appointed a committee to look into the status of the cemetery. The committee recommended that the old gravestones be replaced on the graves. However, more drastic measures were planned and soon carried out. It was decided to convert the old burial ground into a park. That same year (1884), J. O. Seely and others petitioned that the South West Street Cemetery be officially renamed "South Park."

From the annual village report for the year ending in April 13, 1885, we learn how the pioneer cemetery was converted to the Park it is today. "The Old West Street Cemetery has been graded and ready for seeding. The superfluous trees have been removed and those remaining trimmed up. The unsightly old

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5. Kalamazoo Gazette, November 22, 1953.
6. Susan Holmes: Buried in West Street Cemetery December (?) 1845, at age 25. Riverside lot purchased December 13, 1862.
   Gerry Nobly: Buried in West Street Cemetery 1860, (no other information available). Riverside lot purchased 1870. (newspaper error?).
   Albert Evans: Buried in West Street Cemetery May 12, 1862. Riverside lot purchased August 19, 1862.
7. Also this year (1862) the village retired from the private enterprise of the funeral business. Joseph B. Cornell and J. P. Sheldon were appointed to act as a committee to estimate the value and to negotiate the sale of the village hearse. Special meeting of President and Trustees, February 12, 1862; Kalamazoo Village Record No. 3, December 10, 1855 to May 5, 1862.

gravestones have been sunk in the ground, the place of each marked and recorded in the cemetery record. The West Street sidewalk being decayed was taken up, the soil used for grading, and the space filled with gravel ready for permanent walk. The entire amount expended was $289.98. We would recommend the grounds be seeded down, a row of shade trees be set out on the south and west sides and a stone or cement walk be laid on West Street."[8] By 1888, further improvements besides lawns, walks and tree trimming included raising of the grade, perfecting of the lighting and water systems, installation of seats and a central water fountain. All of this, plus the fact that the Park was used for social and political purposes, led to a protracted and costly law suit. It was noted in 1889 that anyone absent from Kalamazoo for a few years would find it difficult to recognize the old, neglected West Street Cemetery of earlier years.

Sometime before 1895, R. Carlisle Burdick of Minneapolis, Minnesota, son of the original donor of the cemetery, revisited the village of his childhood. What he saw at the former pioneer burying ground proved quite a shock. When he further learned that the site had been used for an election and a "bicycle tea," he was convinced that it was no longer used for its originally intended purposes.

In the spring of 1895 he commenced a suit of ejectment in the United States Circuit Court for the Western District of Michigan. He requested possession of the property or monetary compensation for its value. Its worth at that time was estimated at $12,000[9]. Self disqualification of one Judge (Severens), illness of another (Judge Sage), and the necessary appointment of a third (Judge Charles Clark), delayed the case for several years. Judge S. W. Vance of Port Huron, Michigan, and W. L. Mason of Detroit, Michigan, represented the complainant, while George P. Hopkins and Judge A. J. Mills were retained by the city. The contention of the defendant was that since bodies were still interred in the grounds, the property was in effect a resting place for the dead, even though the surface had been altered to a park. Also it was argued that the city had title to the land because of adverse possession of it beyond the time of limitation of action as fixed by statute.[10] In any case, the heirs of Cyren Burdick were not successful in their suit to eject the city from the cemetery site. The court decided that the city's title had not been forfeited and that it was, as the city claimed, still a cemetery.[11] Of greatest interest to genealogists, however, is "Exhibit A," introduced as evidence during the trial. It is called the "West Street Cemetery Record of Graves,"

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8. Annual Reports of the City of Kalamazoo 1855-1889, Report of the Committee on Public Grounds and Buildings, page 41.
9. Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph, January 4, 1898.
10. This means that the city maintained that the claimed owners allowed an open, public and non-permissive use of the land, without asserting their rights for more than the statutory limitation of 15 years.
11. Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph, November 10, 1898.

and consists of a note-book and a pasted-in plat showing the location of graves in the cemetery when it was made into a park. Written on a page of the book is a notation to the effect that "about one half of the known bodies had been moved to Riverside Cemetery. Sosay Martin Verhage and A. A. Davis"[12].

The actual number of individuals buried in the cemetery will never be known. As was customary in early years, many of the head 'stones' were of wood and deteriorated rapidly. Also, many graves were never marked for lack of money. When the cemetery was platted an exact location was made of each grave. Also, a record was made, if legible, of the inscription on the appropriate head and foot stones. Of the 325 located graves, 214 are marked as unknown, presumably because of the poor condition of the markers, or the lack of a stone even though a grave was evident. Included in the latter number was an estimated three to four graves in a mound. If half of the known people had been exhumed, in 1862 or later, then the total population of West Street Cemetery was close to 500 burials. The actual count, however, was no doubt higher.

Following is an alphabetical listing of all the identified burials in the South Westnedge Street Park:

MARY IDA ALLEN
Daughter of G. W., and H. Allen; died May 4, 1857, aged 4 years and 11 months.

BRADFORD ARNOLD
Born at Burrellville, R. I., December 2, 1789; died at Kalamazoo, Michigan, April 15, 1860.

JONAS F. ASH
Died November 13, 1838, aged 29 years.

E. R. BALL
My Husband died May 29, 1858, aged 53 years.
E. R. Ball and others did the interior finishing of the first Kalamazoo Courthouse, when it was built in 1837 - 1838.[13]

WILLIAM BALLON
Died October 19, 1860, aged 35 years.

HELEN C. BENSON
Daughter of L. L. and Maria S. Benson. Born January 17, 1845. Died September 29, 1847.

NELSON BIRCHARD/sic/
Died August 24, 1855, aged 44 years (See Elizabeth B. Burchard)
Nelson Birchard (or Burchard) was landlord of the River House at the foot of Main Street.

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12. This book is part of the records in the office of the Kalamazoo City Clerk.
13. This and all following data about individuals was taken from the Edward J. Stevens Biographical File at the Kalamazoo Public Museum.

IRA W. BIRD.
Died July 27, 1838, aged 69 years.
In 1835 he was living on the east side of the Kalamazoo River. He kept a ferry to take people and teams across the river. The scow was propelled at times by oxen, other times by poles.

GEORGE A. BISHOP
Died December 16, 1855, aged 46 years.

THOMAS BOGARDUS
(No head stone, marked by Clark on Weeks farm, Cooper, Kalamazoo County.[14]

JANNETJE BRASSER
Hierrust Hettyk Van Wylen/Here Rest the Remains of the late deceased (?)/
Geboren /born/ 17 October 1828. Overleden /died/ 7 Mei 1860

MARGARET BRYAN
Wife of Samuel W. Bryan, Born August 3, 1811. Died September 23, 1849

AARON H. BUGBEE
Son of C. B. and Fanny Bugbee. Died May 20, 1848, aged 1 year, 5 months, 12 days.

FANNY BUGBEE
Fanny, Wife of C. B. Bugbee, Died August 27, 1849, aged 36 years, 3 months, 5 days.

ELIZABETH B. BURCHARD /sic/==
Daughter of Simeon Hungerford. Born at Swanton, Vermont, April 12, 1812. Married Nelson Burchard/qv/, October 17, 1836. Died January 11, 1847.

CYREN BURDICK
Died October 26, 1837, aged 37 years.
Four years before his death the donor of the South West Cemetery was living in the heart of the pioneer village, on Main Street. He participated in many civic activities like being associate or "side" judge in the circuit court (1833); serving as Kalamazoo Township supervisor (1836); by acting on the Board of Directors of the Detroit and St. Joseph Railroad (1835); helping to plan and build the first schoolhouse in Kalamazoo, as a member of the school committee; by being a member of the first Board of Directors of the Kalamazoo Mutual Insurance Company (1834) et cetera. For two years he was the first landlord of the Kalamazoo House, from its completion in 1832 to 1834. The Burdicks had the further distinction of being the parents of the first white boy born in what soon became the Village of Kalamazoo. Roderick Carlisle Burdick first saw the light of day on July 17, 1834. The first child to arrive in the community was Mary Belinda Heydenburk, born just ten days before the Burdick baby. His sudden and untimely death in 1837, while trying to disengage a flat boat stranded on a sand bar in the Kalamazoo River, was followed by a funeral that attempted to express his merited public esteem. His popularity and prominence brought together many people from far and wide in the surrounding countryside. Each pall bearer was distinguished by "large sashes over the shoulder, and immense weeds were made from black and white cambric, twined about their hats and falling with long ends down behind nearly to the

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14. Notation as it appears in the West Street Cemetery Record of Graves

ground. As the large procession moved off towards the place of burial, I remember seeing quite a number of Indians attracted by the ceremonials, watching with mute astonishment the pageant /sic/ with which the palefaces started their dead brother on his journey to the spiritland."

PATRICK BURNS
Died December 19, 1847, Aged 38 years.

AMANDA CAHILL
Consort of Abm. Cahill. Died February 12, 1840, Aged 35 years.

CARNELIA J. CAHILL
Died October 15, 1854, Aged 15 months.

CHRISTOPHER CAMPBELL
Died June 29, 1850, Aged 66.

JOHN H. CAMPBELL
Born Geneva, N. Y., May 3, 1816. Died April 27, 1849.
The Kalamazoo Telegraph of May 5, 1849, informs us that Campbell passed away at age 33 and was given a Masonic funeral.

ALIDA JANE CHURCHILL
Daughter of R. P., and F. M. Churchill. Born November 14, 1852. Died August 8, 1854.

ELIZABETH COLMAN
Wife of James Colman. Died November 7, 1845, Aged 72 years, 5 months, 26 days.

JAMES COLMAN
Died November 6, 1848, Aged 77 years, 7 months, 7 days.

GEORGIE J. COOK andSARAH P. COOK
Georgie died July 26, 1839, Aged 2 months and 7 days.
Sarah P. died June 1, 1841, Aged 4 years and 4 months.
Children of L. & C. Cook.

JULIAN M. DAVIDSON
Son of Alexander and Julia Ann Davidson, Died July 11, 1844, Aged 6 months and 15 days.

SALLY ANN DEAN
Wife of Roswell C. Dean, Died May 11, 1853, Aged 27 years and 7 months.

WILLIAM DENISON
Son of Francis and Caroline Denison, Died September 28, 1847, Aged 2 years. (Listed as buried in Mountain Home Cemetery, and as dying September 23, 1347).

MARGARET DIVEN
Wife of Martin Diven. Died August 31, 1854, Aged 30 years.

HARRIET J. DOTY
His daughter /Orrin/. Died October 6, 1850, Aged 17 years.

ORRIN DOTY
Died October 6, 1850, Aged 58 years.

AURILLA DOWNS
Wife of Seth Downs. Died June 5, 1840, Aged 29 years.

LEONARD FARWELL
Born January 10, 1768. Died September 24, 1845.

CHARLES P. FISHER
Adopted Son of G. & S. Fisher, Died August 30, 1852, Aged 3 years and 4 days.
MORISON H. FLEMING
Son of John M., and Sally M. Fleming, Born October 31, 1859, Died September 1, 1861.
CHARLES G. GARRETT
HARRITT ALICE GIBBS
Daughter of Nelson and Abigal Gibbs, Died October 1, 1845, Aged 11 years, 6 months.
THOMAS F. GREEN
Died December 29, 1854, Aged 29 years.
HERBERT GURNSEY
Born October 8, 1831. Died March 22, 1848.
BELINDA HALL
Wife of Elisha Hall, Died December 2, 1839, Aged 29 years.
Elisha Hall came to Kalamazoo in 1830 and is reputed to be the village's first carpenter. In 1836 he was one of the three trustees of the Branch University (now Kalamazoo College).
ISRAEL HALL
Son of Elisha and Belinda Hall, Died October 6, 1837, Aged 13 years, 8 mos.
ELIZABETH B. HARDING
Daughter of Ichabod and Eunice Harding, Died July 15, 1849, Aged 19 years, 8 months, 11 days.
EUNICE HARDING
Wife of Ichabod Harding, Died August 11, 1849, Aged 58 years, 11 months, 20 days.
BENJAMIN HARRISON
Born January 21, 1799. Died December 13, 1847.
JANE HARRISON
Jane, his wife, Born May 12, 1804, Died December 13, 1847.
In 1835 he was living in Bronson, as Kalamazoo was then called, on Harrison Street.
JOANNA HILL
Wife of Rev. Isaac Hill, Died March 7, 1846, Aged 74 years.
DANIEL L. HOUGHTALING
Son of A. and L. Houghtaling, Died September 5, 1853, Aged 11 months.
OUR LITTLE JULIA
Called away May 26, 1854, Aged 9 months.
WILLIAM KING
Died November 11, 1834, Aged 24 years.
CORNELIA KLYN
Wife of Rev. H. G. Klyn, Born March 31, 1797, Died February 8, 1862.
CHARLIE KROM
Our little Charlie Died June 27, 1859, Aged 2 months, 5 days. (stone found, marked 64, C. Krom).[15]

15. Ibid.

CORYDON LANDON

MARY LANDON

MARY ELLIS LINCOLN

Wife of Shubel Lincoln, Died October 3, 1854, Aged 79 years. (Listed as buried in Mountain Home Cemetery).

Shubael/sic/Lincoln, husband of the deceased, was born in Connecticut, March 6, 1770, and died in Ashtabula County, Ohio, January 30, 1835. His wife was born in New Hampshire, April 25, 1775, and as a child, moved with her family to Chelsea, Vermont. They married on March 21, 1793, and some years later moved to Grand Isle County, Vermont, and came to the Western Reserve, in Ohio, in 1825. One of their children, a son, Shubael Austin Lincoln, came to Kalamazoo in 1838. His mother evidently followed him, probably at a later date. He was born in Chelsea, Vermont, May 5, 1805, and married Jane Starr in Charitan, Ohio, June 15, 1824. His first wife dying sometime in 1834, he married Mrs. Cynthia Somerville (nee Brown) in New Castle, Pennsylvania, on September 14, 1846. By his first wife were born Horatio (living in California in 1892); Julia who married James Kelley and who died at Pierson, Michigan, in 1887; Carlos D., telegraph operator and station agent at Potterville, Michigan (1892). Children of his second marriage were: Ellen, Emily, Marietta, and Austin, all of whom were living in Kalamazoo in 1892.

BETSEY E. LOGAN

Wife of H. Logan, Died September 6, 1850, Aged 48 years.

LAURA A. LOVELAND

Daughter of Hiram and Elizabeth Loveland, Born August 26, 1843. Died October 9, 1844.

IMOGINE LUKES

Child of William and Mary A. Lukes, Died August 15, 1855, Aged 6 years, 11 months, 19 days.

FRANKLIN MARLETT

Son of J. and P. Marlett, Died August 12, 1854, Aged 2 years, 4 months, 4 days.

SARAH JANE METCALF

Daughter of D. W. and C. L. Metcalf, Born September 17, 1846, Died June 9, 1847.

WILLIAM MINTON

Died August 11, 1854, Aged 54 years.

The above was a dealer in stone in Kalamazoo in 1846.

WILLIAM G. MURPHY

Born July 5, 1810. Died September 7, 1843.

ELIZABETH NEARPASS

Wife of William H. Nearpass. Died October 12, 1848, Aged 21 years, 6 mos. 27 days. (Foot stone E. A. N.)

CATHERINE O'BRIEN

Died March 13, 1847, Aged 66 years.

Gloria in Excelsis Deo. A native of Amfield, County Kildare, Ireland.

HIRAM OWEN

Died July 27, 1838, Aged 34 years.

MARY F. PATRICK

Our Mother Mary F., Wife of Johnson Patrick, Born May 5, 1801, Died August 22, 1847. (Listed as buried in Mountain Home Cemetery)

Mrs. Patrick is remembered as a capable, energetic woman of note and executive ability. She and her husband began to operate the Big Island Hotel at Schoolcraft in 1832. The Patricks were the parents of a large family of girls. Miss Betsy Foster lived with her sister and brother-in-law. In later years she married Dan Arnold of Cooper, Michigan, and became the mother of five children, one of whom was, in 1889, Judge Daniel Arnold of Allegan, Michigan. A daughter was the wife of Senator Francis Brown Stockbridge. The Patricks moved to Kalamazoo and erected the Exchange Hotel in 1835, on the corner of Rose Street and Michigan Avenue. A year before her death, Mrs. Patrick and her husband conducted a boarding house on the corner of Portage and South Streets.

ALIDA ELIZA PHILLIPS

Daughter of John and Hannah Phillips, Died August 23, 1855, Aged 10 months, and 15 days.

BENJAMIN PHILLIPS

Died December 9, 1847, Aged 53 years.

MARY LLOYD /PHILLIPS/His wife, Died May 9, 1848, Aged 47

AARON PLATT

Died August 1837, Aged 27 years.

REV. SETH J. PORTER

Died August 23, 1834, Aged 32 years

The deceased was evidently a physician as well as a minister. From the Stevens Biographical File we learn that Porter came to Kalamazoo at an unknown, but early date. In May of 1834 Dr. Horace Starkweather was on his way to open an office in Berrien County. At Dr. Porter's request he stayed to attend him and his patients. Dr. Porter left a wife, Cynthia M. and two sons, James B. and Edwin H. Porter. The widow Porter was married to Horace Stimpson of Van Buren County on March 1, 1837, by the Reverend Silas Woodbury.

FRANCIS /sic/RUSSELL

Daughter of Walter and Nancy B. Russell, Died August 24, 1854, Aged 1 year, one month and 6 days.

GEORGE F. RUSSELL

Son of Jason and Caroline Russell, Aged 1 year and 13 days.

VICTOR ALBERT SCHAD

VALENTINE B. SCHUYLER, Died June 18, 1840, Aged 21 years.

AUGUSTA SESEMAN

Daughter of G. W.Seseman, Born August 21, 1857, Died October 8, 1860.

CAROLINE SESEMAN

Daughter of G. W. Seseman, Born February 7, 1853, Died October 3, 1860.

ROBERT SESEMANN /sic/

Son of G. W. Sesemann, Born September 4, 1855, Died October 5, 1860

CORA E. SHAKESPEAR

Daughter of Andrew J. Shakespear

JOHN L. SHAKESPEAR

Died December 5, 1847, Aged 29 years, 11 months, 19 days.

LOVINA SHAKESPEAR

Wife of William Shakespear, Died July 16, 1858, Aged 57 years.
(Listed as buried in Mountain Home Cemetery)

MARCIA SHAKESPEAR
Marcia, his wife, Died November 18, 1859, Aged 51 years.
NANCY M. SHERWOOD
Daughter of Nathan and Hannah Sherwood, Died October 26, 1855, Aged 23 yrs.
NATHAN SHERWOOD
Died February 11, 1853, Aged 60 years.
JOHN J. SIMPSON
Son of Robert and Mary J. Simpson, Died January 23, 1853, Aged 2 years, 6 months, 18 days.
ADELBERT J. SLENKER
Son of J. F. and A. Slenker, Died February 23, 1854, Aged 1 year, 14 days.
SUSAN J. SPRAGUE
Daughter of William and Zeruah Sprague, Died September 26, 1847, Aged 3 months, 12 days.
CHARLES T. STEVENS
Son of Isaacc/sic/ and Betsey Stevens, Died July 20, 1844, Aged 6 months, 20 days.
CLARISSA A. STEVENS
Daughter of Isacc/sic/and Betsey Stevens, Died January 29, 1837, Age 6 yrs. 10 months.
FAYETTE STEVENS
Son of Isacc /sic/and Betsey Stevens, Died January 23, 1837, Aged 3 years, 5 months and 25 days.
TRIPHENIA STEVERS
Daughter of John and Nancy Stevers, Died February 15, 1854, Aged 6 years.
FRANCIS M. STIMPSON
Died 1859
H. H. STIMPSON
Died 1858
JOHN B. STIMPSON
Born July 26, 1795, Died December 22, 1848
EVELINE STREET
Born December 6, 1846, Died October 1, 1847
AN INFANT SON
Born April 5, 1841, Died April 7, 1841
Children of John and Almira Street.
CATHARINE A. TANNEHILL
Daughter of James and Altha Tannehill, Born November 2, 1846, Died September 10, 1847.
JAMES TANNEHILL
Born in Virginia, Died at Kalamazoo April 4, 1860, Aged 42 years.
According to the Kalamazoo Gazette of March 24, 1854, James Tannehill left for California in that year.
MOSES TANNEHILL
Born May 6, 1821, Died September 28, 1849.
CHILDREN OF TERRY
(2 graves)

MARY E. TUBBS
Wife of H. M. Tubbs, Died June 19, 1854, Aged 26.
JANE TURNER
Daughter of J. W. and Sally Turner, Born April 17, 1854, Died August 8, 1846
CLARISA L. ULUM
Daughter of D. and L. Ulum, Died October 1849.
WOUTER /WALTER/VANDEWELDE
Died June 17, 1861, Aged 61 years, 6 months, 11 days.
HANNAH LOUISA WARNER
Daughter of J. P. and S. A. Warner, Died January 27, 1848, Aged 7 years, 3 months, 16 days.
ICHABOD WEEKS
My brother, Born at Greenland, New Hampshire, October 20, 1816, Died September 29, 1848.
ARRISTINE WHITE
Daughter of William E. and Elizabeth White, Born September 1, 1850, Died August 1, 1857.
RANSOM R. WHITE
Son of William E. and Elizabeth White, Born April 13, 1845, Died October 11, 1849.
CAROLINE E. WHITING
Daughter of D. W. and S. C. Whiting, Died October 5, 1847, Aged 2 years.
CHARLES WOODS
Son of Henry, Aged 7 years.
HENRY WOODS
Died June 30, 1850, Aged 50 years

Peace and quiet have again descended upon the South West Street Cemetery, only occasionally to be broken by playful children, unconscious of the remains of the pioneers beneath their feet. It does not seem proper that founders of Kalamazoo should lie in unmarked graves, unrecognized for their contributions that made Kalamazoo the city it is today. A marker, telling the history of the site and containing their names, should be erected by the city, by a genealogical, historical, or patriotic organization.

--The End--

"It would be more honorable to our distinguished ancestors to praise them in words less, but in deeds to imitate them more.---Horace Mann.

"Genius does what it must, and talent what it can."--Owen Meredith.

EPAPHRODITUS RANSOM

IN MEMORIAM

November 12, 1959 marks the centennial of the death of Epaphroditus Ransom, the only man who ever served the State of Michigan, as Governor, from Kalamazoo. In tribute to the memory of this distinguished citizen who is credited with being the Father of the Michigan State Fair which led to the establishment of the Michigan Agricultural College(now Michigan State University), we publish this sketch.

Epaphroditus Ransom was born in Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts, March 24, 1798, the eldest son and fourth child of Ezekiel Ransom, born in Colchester, Conn., Oct. 1, 1763, died Nov. 1, 1838 at his home on the southeast corner of Park and Academy streets in Bronson (now Kalamazoo), Michigan, and whose wife, married at Townshend, Vermont, May 25, 1791, was Lucinda, daughter of General Samuel and Mehitable Fletcher, who died at Kalamazoo, September 30, 1850, and is buried beside her husband in Mountain Home Cemetery. Ezekiel Ransom enlisted in the Vermont Militia at the age of 14 and served throughout the American Revolution.

Epaphroditus Ransom came to Kalamazoo (then Bronson), Michigan, from Townshend, Vermont, in November 1834. He served in the Michigan Legislature for several years. In 1837 he was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court and promoted to Chief Justice in 1843. In 1847 he was elected the seventh Governor of Michigan, serving one term. He afterward became President of the Michigan Agricultural Society and served as Regent of the University of Michigan for several terms. He promoted the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Plank Road, and in 1856 was appointed by President Buchanan Receiver of the District Land Office at Fort Scott, Kansas, where he died November 12, 1859.

February 21, 1827, at Montpelier, Vermont, Epaphroditus Ransom married Almira, daughter of Wyllis J. Cadwell. She died at Fort Scott, Kansas, March 17, 1877 and is buried in Mountain Home Cemetery at Kalamazoo. The children were: (1) Wyllys Cadwell b. at Townshend, Vt., April 28, 1828, m. at Kalamazoo, Mary E. (b. Nottawa Prairie, St. Joseph County, Michigan, Sept. 22, 1835) dau. of Dr. William and Gillian (Lloyd) Mottram, the father being a native of Otsego County, New York and the mother of Virginia, March 5, 1853, 7 children; (2) Elizabeth W., b. Townshend, Vermont, Sept. 22, 1830, d. there Oct. 5, 1831; (3) Antoinette Eugenia b. Townshend, Vt., Oct. 11, 1832, m. April 6, 1854 at Kalamazoo, Michigan, George, b. at Waterloo, N. Y., eldest son of Hon. Samuel Clark. George Clark d. at the Soldiers' Home, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, July 1900, and is buried in Mountain Home Cemetery, Kalamazoo. 6 children; (4) Eugene Beauharnais, b. March 31, 1837 at Kalamazoo where he died August 5, 1837.